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ROBERT T. KENNEY
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE DECEMBER 13, 1973

Modifications of the downtown-waterfront urban renewal plan were announced today by Robert T. Kenney, Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

Kenney, in making the recommendation for changes in the plan to the Authority's five-member Board, said the revisions had been worked out over the past several months with the Waterfront Restudy Committee, a group of citizens representing the North End, the Waterfront, Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, other organizations and property owners in the area.

The Waterfront Restudy Committee, at a meeting Tuesday, voted approval of the new plan.

Kenney said the changes involve two major features:

1. Atlantic Avenue, beginning at State Street, will be realigned as a 44-foot roadway, as compared to the 80-foot wide roadway originally proposed in the plan.

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2. By changining the size and shape of parcels in the original plan, the BRA will be able to develop approximately 700 units of new housing, with approximately half of those units to be for low and moderate income families and the elderly.

Kenney said, "The modifications I am recommending will create about twice as much open space and parkland, and while the scale of development is much less than originally proposed, we will be building more housing in the area than the plan had called for."

Kenney said, "Because these changes were worked out over months of meetings between the Restudy Committee and the BRA, we are confident that the differences which existed before the Restudy have been resolved."

"I want to compliment the Restudy Committee for the cooperative spirit they have shown throughout this planning process and the quality of the work they did. Their recommendations, which we have accepted in substance, mean that this plan is more valid in many ways then the plan which was conceived in the early 1960's."

Kenney said the changes in the plan will mean that the waterfront urban renewal plan will fulfill the needs of the community for more housing and also provide the open space and amenities that will help Bostonians rediscover the rich heritage of the waterfront.

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Two years ago the BRA had embarked on a re-evaluation of the waterfront plan when a dispute over proposed demolition of buildings in the C-2 parcel resulted in a legal challenge be residents of the area.

The Federal court, asked to rule on the challenge, ordered instead that a stipulation and agreement be entered into by all parties concerned. As part of the agreement, the Restudy Committee was established and technical assistance was provided by the BRA staff and outside consultants. The Restudy Committee made a report to the BRA in July, and since that time the BRA design and planning staff has been reviewing the recommendations.

In addition to the changes in the Atlantic Avenue alignment and size of the waterfront park, the plan changes include:

Parcel A-6

--height limit: 150 feet or about 15 stories
--up to 125 units of subsidized housing and/or office space with commercial uses permitted on the first floor
--parking below structure
--the original plan called for a 25-story office tower on this site

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Parcel A-7

--up to a 350-room motel

--height limit: 85 feet or about 7 stories

--building set-back to allow views of buildings on Long Wharf

--limited garage parking on site (major parking requirement to be provided in the Harbor Towers garage)

--the original plan called for a 15-story motel on this site

Parcel D-1

--approximately 125 units of subsidized housing with emphasis on the elderly

--height limit: 125 feet or about 12 stories

--institutional uses, such as a museum to be encouraged on the ground floor

--garage parking on-site

Parcel C-2b

--160 units of low and moderate rent elderly housing (with funds provided out of recent Federal housing allocation) - Parcel will remain as open space unless subsidies obtained for elderly housing

--height controls: 60 feet of 6 stories desired; maximum of 80 feet for taller element if necessary

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Sargent's Wharf

--new construction, possibly in conjunction with rehabilitation of existing buildings

--approximately 225 units, with commercial-office uses, parking; and public access to the water's edge, with emphasis on low/moderate or elderly, design and site program to be oriented to the North End community

Parcel C-2

--additional rehabilitation of existing buildings

--possible new garage near tunnel

--110 units of elderly housing to be developed by Knights of Columbus, Ansonia Council, North End

New Park Area

--4.3 acre Waterfront Park (double original plan)

--.3 acre neighborhood park

--3 acres on Long Wharf

--parks will connect to open space--built and maintained by the future developers of A-6, A-7, D-1 and C-2b

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Atlantic Avenue

--the roadway will be reduced in width to 44 feet (formerly 80 feet) with parking lanes at key locations

--the avenue will follow an alignment along existing Mercantile Street (relocating slightly) and rejoin Atlantic Avenue near Commercial Wharf

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